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# Naval Postgraduate School - BiH Parliamentary Committee Members attend Building Integrity Seminar

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## BiH Parliamentary Committee Members attend Building Integrity Seminar

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Article by Maggie Spivey

Members of the Joint Committee on Defence and Security of the Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) Parliamentary Assembly attended the Building Integrity in Defense Acquisition (BIDA) Seminar September 15 – 16 in Sarajevo at the BiH Peace Support Operations Training Centre (PSOTC).

The seminar was part of the ongoing efforts between the PSOTC and the Naval Postgraduate School—both designated NATO Partnership for Peace Training and Education Centers (PTCs). A team from the Naval Postgraduate School, in its capacity as the United States' PTC (USPTC), coordinated the event.

One of the organizers, Mr. Mark Dankel, consultant to the USPTC and National Security Institute, stated the "impetus for this type of seminar was provided by the Commandant [of the PSOTC, Col. Kenan Dautovic] who suggested a seminar tailored for Parliamentarians and staff would be very appropriate and helpful to the government, and BIDA was borne of this effort."

The purpose of the two-day seminar was to provide a conceptual understanding of public management and procurement principles and institutional integrity fundamentals that apply to any nation, culture, or government agency and also to provide insight into issues linking resources to national security.

For those members of the Committee who attended the seminar, it was particularly beneficial as approximately two-thirds are serving their first term on the Committee. Lending an important presence was the Committee Chair, who is currently serving her third term in the position and has extensive experience on other Committees as well.

According to Dankel, "The engagement of Chairperson Dusanka Majkic clearly reflected the import and value [she] believed the BIDA seminar could have. The Chairperson wrote a small book of notes and was not at all hesitant to engage the presenters across a great many subjects and in some depth."

While Dankel focused on the integrity, transparency, and accountability component of the program, Dr. Francois Melese, Professor of Economics and the Executive Director of the Defense Resources Management Institute (DRMI), focused on the resource management, defense acquisition, and budget building aspects.

In developing the appropriate content, Melese spoke with BiH Minister of Defense Selmo Cikotic, who had twice visited the Naval Postgraduate School over the past two years—both times speaking to the DRMI class in session.

"I talked with him before going over [to Sarajevo], so I had an idea of some of the initiatives that they are trying to launch in their MOD [Ministry of Defense]; so I integrated as best I could things that they were doing with the basic theoretical framework and analytical foundation that they need," stated Melese.

"The MOD is building budgets that will respect their fiscal constraints, but at the same time, optimize and integrate as well as possible with NATO and other goals and objectives that they have for their MOD," he added.

For the Committee members attending the seminar, they were getting "exposure to the kind of initiatives that were ongoing in the MOD in building their budget, which will be presented to Parliament by Minister Cikotic and combined with the overall budget for the country," Melese continued. "The Committee then provides civilian oversight that you want in any country."

In addition to the Committee members, seminar attendees also included other representatives of Parliament, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the U.S. Embassy, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the United Nations Development Programme.

Also in attendance as both the keynote speaker and a participant was the Honorable Marina Pendes, Deputy Minister of Defense for Resource Management of BiH, responsible for personnel management, finances and budgeting, and procurement and logistics.

In various elected positions since 2002, Deputy Minister Pendes is currently the highest-ranking female member of BiH's Ministry of Defense and is also a graduate of DRMI's Senior International Defense Management Course.

At the conclusion of the seminar, the Committee Chair approached Dr. Melese about sending a DRMI representative for a couple of weeks to provide direction and further instruction to the Committee in an effort to implement his recommendations put forth during the seminar.

With a doctorate focused on public budgeting, Dr. Robert McNab, Associate Professor with DRMI and the Global Public Policy Academic Group, is well-suited for the task and is currently working with the USPTC Program Office to realize this request.

To view more photos from this event, view the [event album](#) on the USPTC Facebook Page.

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